

Capitol Clarion

California State Capitol Museum Volunteer Association

May 2014

President's Message

By Alex King

Fun Times Continue...

That age old, cynical question: "Are we having fun yet?" is answered. YES !!!

Several CSCMVA members toured the **Effie Yaew Nature Center** last month and got to know a wise old barn owl (and a couple of other interesting creatures); we even walked down to the water-starved American River.

Just a few weeks ago, over 45 of us spent some quality time with several former Governors. For having served the State of California from the late 1800's to the 1920s, Governors Gage, Pardee, Gillette and Johnson looked remarkably healthy during CSCMVA's presentation of **Governors' Day**. Thank you to all that participated – we received some very nice compliments from the public visitors.

We have interesting "training" events scheduled in the near future and soon we'll be serving ice cream for Admission Day and beginning preparation for Election Day. Not only are we having "fun;" we don't know how to slow down.

Some of you have asked about the "**Rest of the Story**" regarding our meeting with new-found Amish relatives. The only day on our recent trip that it rained was in the Lancaster and New Holland, PA, and nearby small towns. While I wished I could bring some of that precipitation home, it did not spoil our visits. "Amish Country" includes farmland and communities that are clean, neat, scenic, intriguing and wonderful. A more basic style of living, with emphasis on friendships and simplicity, is tempting in this busy world of ours.

It is confirmed. After a bit more research into our family histories, Eli King and I **are** related! Eli, and wife Sarah, were wonderfully gracious in showing us not only their business and home, but we actually saw a farm that belonged to my family, three generations ago! A highlight was a visit to the Lapp Dairy, where upon entering their shop we were greeted with the most delicious aroma of fresh cooking thin waffles being made into cones for ice cream that was so fresh and rich, I really can't describe it. The rain precluded an Amish buggy ride, but I did meet their horse, "Dreamer,"

A chance meeting at the WI brought new relatives and a wonderful experience. Wow!

~ Alex



The **Capitol Clarion** is published monthly by the California State Capitol Museum Volunteer Association.

Marti Dennis, Managing Editor

Bill Geach, Eternal Editor

Deadline for announcements and articles is the **1st of the month**. Articles can be e-mailed to the Editor at:

mdennis1@att.net



2014 Board of Directors

Front (L to R): Marilyn Thompson, Alex King, Bob Dreyer, Bob Dennis

Back: Julie Mallett, Christine Tyler David Keck, Randall Williams, Connie Clark

Minutes of the CSCMVA Board Meeting:

Editor's Note:

Due to a lack of meeting space in the Capitol, the May 2014 CSCMVA Board Meeting was cancelled.

Please join the Board at the next regularly-scheduled meeting on

Wednesday, June 4 at 1:00 PM.

Sunshine Corner:

Since the last issue of the **Clarion**, gratefully there have no new reports of member illness. However, we continue to keep

Suzanne Latimer in our thoughts as she battles a long term health issue.

If you know of someone who could use a word of encouragement, comfort, or get well wishes, please contact **Scotty Hodges** who thoughtfully expresses CSCMVA support on behalf of our membership. Scotty can be contacted at hashhogg901@yahoo.com or by phone at 707- 425 -1909.



Governors' Day Living History Event:

What a fun and successful event we enjoyed with 200 Capitol guests on Sunday May 4! Thanks to the leadership provided by Co-Chairs **Julie Mallett** and **Marita Martin**, and Director, **Connie Clark**, we were able to share an important part of California state and Capitol history with interested and attentive visitors. It was a special treat to inform more than 30 German visitors. While the translation of our historical conversations took some Parks staff expertise, and patience from all, we were able to leave a favorable memory with these foreign and all guests. Thanks to **Lou Below** for the photos of our special May event, and to **San Bhakta** and committee for a generous spread of food.



Governors' Day: May 4, 2014



A Portion of the Governors' Day Cast and Crew



Report of the Archives Committee:

Under the leadership of **Marylin Thompson**, the Archives Committee has held three meetings to review just a portion of the memorabilia and artifacts collected over the last 30+ years of CSCMVA. Thanks to the efforts of **Bill and Mary Geach**, much of our organizational history has been carefully and thoughtfully saved. **Bobby Scoggan** has added to this treasure trove with memorabilia from the earliest years of the Association. It is now the challenge of the Committee to organize and preserve the most important pieces of CSCMVA history for the future.

Do any of you have copies of CSCMVA materials that you can share with the committee? If so, please contact Marylin Thompson at Thompson.m@sbcglobal.net

The Capitol Clarion Lifeline....

One interesting and important result of the work of the Archives Committee is the discovery of **Capitol Clarion** issues dating back to January 1982. That means that the volume and issue numbers of our monthly newsletter are inaccurate. While this month's issue reflects a "Volume 8, Issue 5" status, it is more appropriately **Volume 32, Issue 5!** We have to thank previous editors, of whom **Bill Geach** is the one with most longevity, for this historical communication effort.

Since those original efforts, newsletters have grown to include color photographs (now all digitally exchanged between photographer and editor), "clip art," discussion of a CSCMVA website with promise of electronic volunteer scheduling and electronic circulation of the document itself!

Watch your mailbox; future issues of this news piece may reflect the REAL Volume number of this effort!

Special Feature:

Karl Mindermann and the Restoration of the California State Capitol: A Legacy Restored

By Marti Dennis

*Editor's Note: In lieu of the regular "Volunteer Spotlight" feature this month, I am including a piece about a former volunteer, **Karl Mindermann**, and his role in the restoration of the California State Capitol. Recently his wife of more than 50 years, **Henrietta**, was kind enough to sit down with me and share information about the restoration effort and Karl's unique role in the project.*

We all have learned that the California legislature first occupied our beautiful state capitol in 1869. By the 1890's the building's decorative work was labeled "perfect." However, time and a "booming population" were hard on the Capitol structure. It was remodeled several different times to accommodate a growing state administrative operation, and it slowly lost much of its original beauty and structural integrity. In the 1970's – a hundred years since its first occupants took up residence – it was determined to be seismically unsafe.



Capitol Dome Restoration

As a result, in 1975 it was decided to restore the Capitol to its original grandeur, making it both safe in the event of an earthquake and returning it to its Victorian beauty.



**Karl Mindermann 1981
Sacramento Bee**

Perhaps you did not know that the double-domed structure was a major part of the restoration effort, and **Karl Mindermann**, an employee of Park Mechanical, was the craftsman selected to lead the dome restoration project. Karl and his wife Henrietta subsequently became members of CSCMVA, joining with the Class of 2004.

Karl was born in Bremen, Germany where he learned and perfected the craft of silversmith. Enjoying American novels of the Wild West, Karl soon decided to contact distant relatives in the United States to learn about the potential for his immigration. They agreed to sponsor him, and he arrived in California in 1951. There was minimal interest in silver when he arrived. It had been replaced by stainless steel, and so Karl set out to learn a new craft: sheet metal. He joined Park Mechanical as a Journeyman and specialized in the crafting of stainless steel kitchens in local Sacramento restaurants.

When Park Mechanical was awarded the state contract for the restoration of the Capitol's exterior copper dome, Karl was selected to lead the effort as master craftsman. He was "responsible for mending, smoothing and reattaching 300 copper ribs, along with cutting, contouring and fitting new copper sheets that form the dome." The task was a complex one, so Karl invented a machine to do the tedious and meticulous work. Patterns with variations for each set of 13 panels running from the tip to the bottom of the egg-shaped dome were required. Over a period of six months, Karl's ground level work succeeded in repairing the leaking roof as well as providing the attractive new dome.

Karl and fellow Capitol artisan Michael Casey were each recognized by the American Institute of Architects as "Craftsman of the Year" in 1982 for their exemplary Capitol work. They were honored in Atlantic City, NJ as the **only** national winners in their respective categories. Sen. Edward Kennedy was the keynote speaker at the event. Karl and Michael were also the subject of a January 18, 1982 "Cheers for a Born-Again Capitol" article which appeared in Time magazine.

For all his accomplishments and accolades, Karl remained modest stating, "You drive by [the Capitol] and you look up at it, and you can't help feeling anything but proud."



Karl and Henrietta Mindermann - 2005

Karl Mindermann, master craftsman, loving husband and father, and CSCMVA volunteer passed away in April 2008. In addition to his proud family, he leaves a beautiful copper dome as his legacy.

Sources: "Roses for a Restoration," Sacramento Bee, October 23, 1981; "Cheers for a Born-Again Capitol," Time Magazine, January 18, 1982; Der Hermann-Sohn, May 2008; "Volunteer Spotlight," Capitol Clarion, July 2007; California State Capitol Restoration, a Pictorial History, 1988.

DVD Available: "A Legacy Restored"

For those interested in a comprehensive photo journal of the ambitious and successful California State Capitol Restoration, visit the Capitol Bookstore for a recently re-released DVD: "A Legacy Restored." Cost is \$10.00, and proceeds from the sale go to support CSCMVA.

Congratulations to Scotty Hodges...

...who recently was appointed Eucharistic Minister (EM) in the Episcopal Church. In her new position, Scotty is responsible for assisting the Priest in the service and during Communion. She will participate in the entire service from entrance with the holy cross to acting as lector for the appropriate readings, and she will provide assistance with administering the elements of wine and bread to communicants.

Her activities may include weddings and funeral services. Scotty has earned this recognition through on-the-job training, reading, video coursework, and certification of successful completion of required Human Resources training. Scotty's new role will allow her to act as visiting EM to those in congregate care facilities and those who are home bound and unable to attend church services.

"If you want something done....give it to a busy person." Scotty fits that old adage, as she manages to provide so many different levels of service in varied and different ways. Congratulations, Scotty, on your new role and special responsibilities!

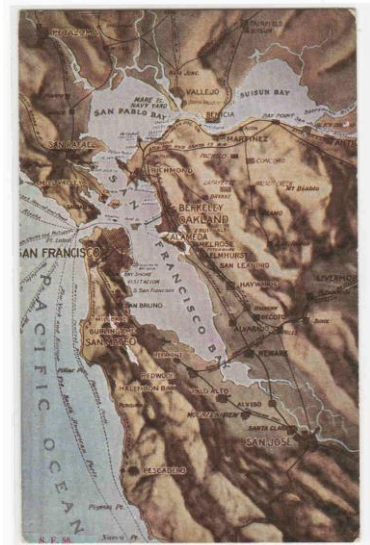
Did You Know....?

By Clem Dougherty

...that the entrance to San Francisco Bay (now the Golden Gate) was discovered from the Oakland side of the Bay and not from the San Francisco side? Yes, it's true. In our last newsletter, we left the Sacred Expedition commanded by Don Gaspar de Portola on the top of the coastal mountain range above present day San Bruno looking upon San Francisco Bay for the first time. In that last newsletter, we discussed how San Francisco Bay was accidentally discovered by land and not by sea on November 1, 1769.

Historians long believed that Sergeant Jose Ortega, upon being sent by Portola to the top of the ridge on November 1, 1769, also traveled up the San Francisco peninsula to the present day Golden Gate so as to become the first European to discover the entrance to the Bay. Apparently, this is not the case. Historians now believe that it was not until 1770, approximately 1 year later, that **Pedro Fages**, the second Spanish governor of California, and his party scouting along the shore on the East Bay side, became the first Spanish explorers to see the narrow gap constituting the entrance to the Bay between the two peninsulas (San Francisco County on the south; Marin County on the north) In other words the Golden Gate as the entrance to the Bay was first discovered from the opposite Alameda County/Contra Costa County shore.

That Portola made no effort to reach the Golden Gate from the San Francisco side makes sense when we consider the fact that San Bruno Mountain lay perpendicular between him on top of the ridge and the Golden Gate to the north. In other words Portola looking north from the top of the ridge near present day San Bruno



San Francisco Bay

could not see the top of the San Francisco peninsula because of a huge mountain stretching perpendicular from the ocean to the bay and lying between him and the entrance to the Bay. Apparently, thinking that any effort to go north in search of an entrance to the Bay on the western side was blocked by the huge intervening mountain, Portola sent Sergeant Ortega south down around the southern end of the Bay and then up the eastern side. Ortega and his party rode down around the southern end of the Bay and up the eastern side to present day Hayward where for the first time the Sacred Expedition encountered hostile Indians. In the face of such deadly opposition Ortega retreated and met up with Portola and the rest of the party on the western side of the Bay.

Rather than engaging hostile Indians on the eastern side of San Francisco Bay, the entire party including Portola retreated to what is now Monterey Bay although Portola did not recognize it as such. After taking a vote of all the officers, the entire party returned to San Diego by the way they had come and arrived back in San Diego on January 24, 1770. Portola told Father Junipero Serra who had stayed in San Diego to found the first mission that he (Portola) could not find Monterey Bay. Serra was extremely unhappy. Next Time: The Sacred Expedition returns north.

(Sources: Rawls and Bean: California, An Interpretive History, 9th ed., pp. 36-39; Carner-Ribalta: Gaspar De Portola, Explorer of California, pp.153-155;185-191; Douglas Kyle.Ed.: Historic Spots in California, 4th ed., pp.4-5;174;214;334;368-369)

*(Editor's Note: The Special Features column is dedicated to interesting articles about California, our CA State Capitol or other state capitols. CSCMVA members are encouraged to share experiences and / or researched information in this column. For inclusion in the **Clarion**, please send articles to Marti Dennis, Editor at mdennis1@att.net.)*

Upcoming Events:

Board Meeting;	Wednesday June 4, 1 PM
Training: Park Dept. Archives At McClellan Park	Tuesday June 10, 10 AM
Summer Social	TBA in mid-August
Admission Day	Tuesday, September 9
Election Day	Saturday, October 18

CSCMVA Website:

<http://portal.parks.ca.gov/CapitalDistrict/CapitolMuseum/CapitolMuseumVolunteers>

Volunteer Coordinator: 324-0319
Rachel Martinez

Tour Guide Office: 324-0333

Scheduler's Desk: 324-2088

Capitol Tours daily 9 am – 4 pm, closed Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day